

February 17, 2004

Date: February 11, 2004

Subject: **TRANSPORTATION ENHANCEMENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

Location: Rooms 112 and 113, NHDOT
3:30 PM

Attended By:

Members:

Councilor Raymond Burton – Chairman
Senator Robert B. Flanders
Representative Mark E. McConkey
Commissioner Michael Nolin, NHDES
Cynthia Copeland, Strafford RPC
Jeff Brillhart, NHDOT
Chris Gamache, DRED

Members not present included James McConaha, Dept of Cultural Resources, Alphonse Dixon, Municipal Association Designee, and Harry Kinter, FHWA

Others Present:

Carol Murray, NHDOT	Michael Pillsbury, NHDOT
Ram Maddali, NHDOT	Thomas Jameson, NHDOT
James Moore, NHDOT	

Notes on meeting:

Councilor Burton called the meeting to order at 3:30 PM. Councilor Burton introduced each committee member present as well as the NHDOT staff.

Approval of Minutes:

Councilor Burton asked for a motion to approve the April 15, 2002 Advisory Committee meeting minutes. Motion was moved by Representative Mark McConkey and seconded by Chris Gamache. By unanimous decision the motion passed.

Gorham Projects 13904 and 12279 funding increase request

Mike Pillsbury was introduced to discuss the funding request from the Town of Gorham. He explained that Gorham had two projects selected from previous funding cycles to construct trails. The original funding was for \$568,000 and \$309,000 and Gorham is now requesting an additional \$300,000 to complete the projects. Bill Jackson, Town Manager of Gorham explained the reasons for the funding request which included inflation and bridge work that was more expensive than planned. He indicated the trail is all designed and can be built with this funding request. NH Senator John Gallus said he supports the project and

believes it would be good for the North Country. Dick Brothers of the Governor's Office said that Governor Benson supports the project. In response to a question from Cynthia Copeland on the multi-modal nature of the project, Mr. Jackson indicated that the trail would be open to all non-motorized uses of travel. Snowmobiles will be prohibited in the winter. The trail will also serve as an emergency access for fire and rescue vehicles. The trail is part of a bigger trail system in the area and will link to the existing trails. This section of the trail is approximately 2 miles long and will have a hard packed gravel surface. Mr. Gamache asked how much money is available this round. Ram Maddali said that about \$7 million is available for this round and the funding for this project increase would be coming from this \$7 million.

Commissioner Nolin moved that the Committee approve the request for additional funding. Senator Flanders seconded the motion and said the committee should fund the existing projects before deciding on new ones. The motion passed unanimously.

Franklin-Northfield-Tilton Project 13484 funding increase request

Mr. Pillsbury discussed the Franklin-Northfield-Tilton request with the Committee. He explained that the project involves constructing a 3 mile section of trail. The original application involved \$260,000, and the applicant is now requesting an additional \$84,533.00 for the project. This increase was due to inflation and other unforeseen expenses. The Town will use labor and volunteers to help offset costs. Senator Flanders asked whether the project is part of a bigger project. Mr. Pillsbury indicated the trail to be constructed would be part of a regional plan that will provide a large trail system. Senator Flanders moved a motion to approve the funding request, seconded by Representative McConkey. The motion passed unanimously.

Overview of current applications

Councilor Burton turned to meeting over to Mr. Maddali to give an overview of the applications. Mr. Maddali said that there is about \$7 million (less the amounts just approved) available over the next 3 years for new TE projects. Sixty-seven applications totaling about \$35 million have been submitted. Mr. Maddali said that NHDOT worked with Federal Highway Administration to determine eligibility of projects and their comments are shown in the right most column of the summary sheets. Tom Jameson distributed a summary of all the Regional Planning Commission's rankings of their regional TE applications.

Mr. Maddali said that after the last round of TE projects selection, some of the RPCs contacted NHDOT to develop scoring criteria to assist the Committee and the applicants in evaluating the merits of the projects. Mr. Pillsbury then presented suggested scoring criteria for projects (see attached sheets). Mr. Pillsbury went through the different criteria and explained the rationale for the different parameters. Mr. Pillsbury indicated it is up to the Committee members to use the criteria as they see fit. Councilor Burton thought it would be a good guide for the Committee. He requested that the record show that the Committee will use it as a guide. Ms. Copeland felt the scoring criteria will address concerns expressed by communities in her region. Jeff Brillhart indicated he would like a

spreadsheet based on the criteria be developed to facilitate the scoring process for those who wish to use it. Senator Flanders felt a spreadsheet would be helpful.

Finalize meeting dates and selection process

There was discussion relative to upcoming meetings. The next meeting will be a public hearing for applicants to present their project. Because there are 67 projects, most applicants will only have about 5 minutes for presentation. There was a discussion on whether or not the regional planning commissions should present all the projects. Commissioner Nolin said that at the Public Hearing, the Committee should be listening to the applicants and noted that an enthusiastic applicant can sway the decision of the Committee. Representative McConkey stated that all presenters should be kept to a strict time limit. Councilor Burton said NHDOT staff will keep things moving and he will keep presenters on track. Councilor Burton said that he will leave it to the NHDOT technical staff to come up with the format for the Public Hearing. It was agreed the Public Hearing will be held on Tuesday, March 2, 2004, starting at 1:30 PM and will go until approximately 9:30 PM with an hour break for dinner around 5:30 PM.

Councilor Burton discussed the meeting following the hearing in which all the scoring would be finalized. He requested that the projects be shown in order of ranking with the remaining funding amount shown in a column. When the funding level is reached a line is drawn to show which projects are funded. Ms. Copeland asked if the Committee could ask applicants to request less money to allow more projects to be funded. Mr. Pillsbury responded that a lot of projects this round ask for large dollar amounts and after the rankings are complete they could look at phasing some of these projects to free up funds. After discussion it was decided that the final meeting to select projects would be held on Wednesday, March 17, 2004 at 3:00 PM. Councilor Burton requested that all the information from the TE committee meetings be distributed to the Executive Councilors and put on the NHDOT web site.

Senator Flanders made a motion to adjourn and Commissioner Nolin seconded it. The motion passed unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 4:35 PM.

Submitted by:
Thomas Jameson

cc: Committee Members
C. Murray
J. Moore
A. Sanborn
R. Maddali
M. Pillsbury